TER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI M. M. JACOB): (a) According to the investigation carried out by the CBI, Prabhakaran has been identified as one of the prime accused in the case.

(b) and (c) Sri Lanka authorities have so far cooperated fully with SIT.

Royalty to Assam on crude oil

1870. SHRI BHADRESWAR BURAGOHAIN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) by when Government propose to increase the royalty on crude oil to Assam; and

(b) what is the present rate of royalty provided to the States of Assam, Gujarat and Maharashtra by the Central Government, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) The Report of Eswaran Committee on Royalty on Crude Oil and Natural Gas is under examination by the Government.

(b) The present rate of royalty on crude oil is Rs. 314/tonne and that on Natural Gas is 10 per cent selling price which is same for all States.

Foreign Exchange for Oil Production Project

1871. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Oil and Natural Gas Commission requires more than 3,400 million dollars of foreign exchange to finance the Eighth Oil production project in the country;

(b) whether Government propose to have collaboration with foreign companies for raising funds from various foreign agencies to fund the project; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) ONGC's proposals for the Eighth Plan indicated a requirement of foreign exchange of this order.

(b) and (c) Foreign exchange would be raised by way of loans from multilateral agencies, supplier's credit, external commercial borrowings and purchase of foreign exchange by ONGC in the market in accordance with the Liberalised Exchange Rate Management System (LERMS). Government have also taken a decision in principle to develop certain discovered oil|gas fields in joint venture with private Indian and foreign companies.

Sending of a Committee to France

1872. DR. NARREDDY THULASIREDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to send a high-powered Committee to France to study the National Oil Policy of France which may be useful to our country;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) It is not considered necessary.